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WORKS IN PROGRESS

ESTABLISHED IN 1990 BY THE THURSTON COUNTY RAINBOW COALITION

When they come for the schoolkids, resist!

Confronting the reality of military recruitment in local, national schools

By Phoebe Blanding

As a high school student, I find the book on counter-recruiting, *Army of None*, especially unnerving. Throughout the whole of our childhood, we are led to believe our lives have value but it appears that our current government thinks that we have the most value as cannon fodder. From glaringly obvious recruitment strategies like military booths on career day, to slightly more subtle tactics like a woman known as Mama Drill exulting the benefits of joining the military as part of a motivational speech, it is clear that the US army has plans for me and my peers, and they definitely aren't positive.

Army of None, written by Aimee Allison and David Solnit and published by Seven Stories Press in 2007, offers not only informative cartoons, but chilling facts, quotes and pictures. Everything that the army might seem to offer crumbles as you read this book, and even thinking about joining the army would feel absurd. Even more frightening than the dishonesty of military recruiters is the way that they target people my own age, fourteen-years-old.

A picture of pre-adolescent, uniformed students in the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) program performing drills with wooden rifles is disturbing, a sight reminiscent of Hitler Youth and eerily similar to images of child soldiers. JROTC is a military program for high school students, with 500,000 students enrolled in it. It can be used to gain credit for physical education, and students are often placed in these classes when P.E. classes become full, with or without the consent of their parents. 50% of JROTC cadets are recruited into the lowest enlisted military ranks. There are other, similar programs headed by the military, many of which actually target children as young as eight years of age.

Current recruitment patterns make it clear that the military is targeting low-income people. JROTC and other programs are more prevalent in low-income areas and schools with less funding. Not only does the military appear to be targeting low-income youth; it seems to be focusing on youth of color in particular; 54% of JROTC students are youth of color.

None of the army's bait for reeling in young people remains attractive when deconstructed with information in *Army of None*. This book is a powerful tool when trying to counter-recruit. Any illusions you might have about the intentions of military recruiters are quickly shattered.

Are you thinking that the military will give you college money? Think again. 65% of recruits who sign up for the Montgomery GI Bill receive no money for college, and only 15% receive a college degree.

▸ See **ARMY OF ZERO** on page 5

Army of None Project comes to Olympia

David Solnit, one of the authors of the counter-recruiting manual ***Army of None***, along with **Chanan Suarez-Diaz**, President of Washington **Iraq Veterans Against the War**, will be in Olympia to lead an interesting and practical workshop for students.

They will discuss counter-recruiting methods and issues surrounding ending the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. David and Chanan will share the military story young people don't hear from recruiters. As organizers, they will share stories and tactics of effective resistance from around the country. This is part of a national tour called the **"Army of None Project,"** which is bringing skills workshops, live performances, information and resources to 40 communities across the US.

Recruitment-age students interested in attending the workshop could be prepared with their concerns, questions and ideas for the future.

In addition to the workshop, four local musical acts will perform: **Gumar & His Magical Midi Band** got so magical by dipping its cardboard instruments into a magical pond in the forest. **The Blow**, led by Khaela Maricich, is addicted to making songs. **C.O.C.O.** play bass and drums in the style of an early eighties no-wave band with soulful sixties girl group vocals. **The Saints of Everyday Failures** make music for the people — live, direct, blunt and revealing.

The event takes place Friday, Jan. 11 at The Olympia Center for the Performing Arts, Stage II (black box theater), located at 512 Washington Street in Downtown Olympia.

Event schedule:

6:00 Doors open, food
6:30 Workshop begins
8:00 Doors open for music. $6 admission
8:30 Music: local musical acts Gumar & His Magical Midi Band, the Blow, C.O.C.O. and the Saints of Everyday Failures

Admission is free all night for workshop participants and $6 for live music.

For more information, contact **Know All You Can Know** 360.412.1519, kayck@olywa.net or 360.951.2801, infokim@zhonka.net. Myspace: Army of None Olympia. Parents can call or write for information about how to get involved with local schools.

TWO WEEKS THAT SHOOK OLYMPIA

by Peter Bohmer

"There's a time when the operation of the machine becomes so odious, makes you so sick at heart, that you can't take part, you can't even passively take part, and you've got to put your bodies upon the gears and upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus, and you've got to make it stop! And you've got to indicate to the people who run it, to the people who own it, that unless you're free, the machine will be prevented from working at all!"

—Mario Savio, on the steps of Sproul Plaza, UC Berkeley, December 2, 1964

For almost two weeks in November 2007, anti-war activists in Olympia, Washington slowed down (and stopped, for two different periods of 12 hours or more) the flow of military weapons and military cargo that were unloaded from a Navy ship that had returned from Iraq. For 24 hours a day, we used a variety of tactics and actions. They have included sitting in front of trucks carrying Stryker vehicles and other military equipment from leaving the Port of Olympia, building barricades on the roads where these military vehicles were traveling, anti-war demonstrations through the streets of Olympia and vigils downtown. A hearing was held at City Hall, on Sunday, Nov. 11, to document the excessive police force used against people who participated in these actions. We testified at the Olympia City Council and at a hearing of the elected Port Commissioners demanding that they take a stand opposing the United States war against Iraq by not letting our Port be used to transport war supplies. On Nov. 17, more than 400 people marched through the streets of Olympia to protest the war in Iraq, against police violence toward demonstrators and in support of the protests at the Port of Olympia. About 600 people have taken part in some or all of these protests.

History

For three years, various anti-war, social justice and student groups such as Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) have demanded that Olympia officials take a stand against the war by not permitting our Port to be used for military cargo going to and coming from Iraq. To make this a reality people have put their bodies on the line each time the port has been used with the most recent actions being the longest, largest and most successful in actually stopping shipments. Lt. Ehren Watada, who was the first commissioned officer to refuse deployment to Iraq, was in part inspired by anti-war Port protests in 2006 in making his decision to refuse to go to Iraq. There have also been protests against and resistance to military shipments to Iraq in spring 2007 in Aberdeen and Tacoma, WA, which is the main port used by the military. We hope by our actions to inspire direct and militant action against the US war in Iraq and to end the complicity of local communities, e.g., our ports in the carrying out of this war. Growing non-cooperation with this war and the possible future war with Iran by more and more communities is one key part of a strategy to get the US to withdraw from Iraq and not attack Iran.

The major group coordinating these actions has been the Olympia Port Militarization Resistance (PMR). It was formed in May 2006 when Olympians outraged by the war attempted to block outgoing Stryker vehicles and other military equipment in advance of the deployment of the 3rd Brigade Stryker team from Ft. Lewis, 15 miles north of Olympia. The troops from this Brigade returned to Ft. Lewis in October 2007 minus the 48 soldiers who did not return; they were killed in Iraq. PMR's goal is to "end our community's participation in the illegal occupation of Iraq by stopping the military's use of the Port of Olympia". Its strategy from the beginning has included public education about the war and how the military's use of the Port supports the military occupation, and a commitment to nonviolent civil disobedience. PMR has tried to work with the Longshore Union (ILWU),

▸ See **TWO WEEKS** on page 4

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Works In Progress is a free, volunteer-operated progressive community newspaper based in Olympia, Washington. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect those of *Works In Progress* and are solely those of the authors.

Submissions
Please send text as Word attachments. Artwork and photos can be sent electronically or we can scan them for you as camera-ready/black & white.

WIP reserves the right to publish in whole or part all submissions. For editing purposes, please enclose your phone number.

Articles may be reprinted. Please cite source.

If you don't see your issue being covered in Works In Progress*, it's because you aren't writing about it! (Or aren't finding someone else to cover it!)*

Send submissions to *submissions@olywip.org* or mail to Works In Progress, PO Box 295, Olympia, WA 98507-0295.

Governing Tool
The following statement is part of the Editorial Policy and is the governing tool for the Anti-Discrimination Clause:

WIP *will make every effort to work with the contributor of material considered by* WIP *to be offensive in order to reach a mutually agreed upon resolution, but* WIP *reserves the right as a last resort to edit or not print submitted material.*

Mission Statement
"Our aim is to confront injustice and encourage a participatory democracy based on economic, social, and environmental justice. *Works In Progress* is dedicated to providing a voice for those most affected by the exclusionary and unfair practices that seek to silence the oppressed."

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Anti-Discrimination Clause
We will collectively endeavor to be sensitive and respectful to all those oppressed in this society, and their issues. However, if and when we should make a mistake in this regard, we expect to acknowledge it and to express regret for injury or insult given.

Back Issues
Some back issues are available in the Timberland Library system. *WIP* is being archived on microfilm by the UW Library.

About the cover: What about it?

WIP Schedule

Submission Deadline:
Jan 25

WIP Advertising
(360) 956-1136

7.25 x 4.75	$125
4.75 x 4.75	$83
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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Free School Anti-Candida cooking class
Sunday, January 6, 6:30–8 pm, Fertile Ground (in the kitchen) ~ 311 9th Avenue SE, Olympia, WA 98501 (behind public library)

For people who need to get in control of their digestion, from mild to severe issues, this class could change everything. If you struggle with yeast infections, have ever taken antibiotics for extended periods of time or more than 10 times in your life, or have moderate to severe sugar cravings---come learn how important the flora (friendly bacteria) in your intestines really are. We will discuss food combining, the 80-20 rule, and more while cooking a meal that will support your digestion and help eliminate long-term sugar cravings. Facilitator: Summer Bock

POWER Mom's Night Out: Legislative Priorities Discussion and Training
Monday, January 7th , Potluck 5:30 pm, First United Methodist Church, 1224 Legion Way SE

Onsite childcare.

The Global Banquet: The Politics of Food
January 9th, Wednesday 7-9 pm, Traditions Café, 300 5th Avenue, Olympia

Please join us in viewing and discussing "The Global Banquet: The Politics of Food" (video) at Traditions Cafe.

This video helps viewers to understand the deeply destructive aspects of the corporate globalization of food. It shows how free trade policies, advanced mainly by the World Trade Organization (WTO), allow a handful of very powerful corporations to control the world's food system. These corporations, which enjoy enormous profits, are largely responsible for the destruction of the family farm economy in the Unites States and the eradication of the livelihood of peasant farmers throughout the developing world.

The situation is indeed critical, but disaster is not inevitable. Unjust trade policies that now favor the few can be rewritten to favor many.

Part One: Who's Invited (25 minutes)

Part Two: What's on the Menu? (25 minutes)

This event is co-sponsored by the Interfaith Works Earth Stewardship Committee and Earth Care Catholics of Olympia.

Free School Cooking With the Seasons: A Wintertime Cooking Class
January 10, 6:30–8 pm, Fertile Ground (in the kitchen) ~ 311 9th Avenue SE, Olympia, WA 98501 (behind public library)

Get clear about the importance of eating seasonally on a fundamental level. We will cook a delicious wintertime meal while discussing ideas for simple seasonal eating. Plus we'll discuss the new term "locavore". It's in the dictionary! Facilitator: Summer Bock

Counter Recruitment Workshops
Friday, January 10 and Saturday, January 11

David Solnit and Chanan Suarez-Diaz, President of Washington Iraq Veterans Against the War will lead counter military recruitment workshops based on Solnit's counter-recruitment manual Army of None.

Two Dates:

Thursday, January 10. SPSCC Noon. More info/contact: www.spsccbrick.org

Friday, January 11. Washington Center Stage II (black box) 512 Washington St.

6- 8 pm: Army of None Workshop. Free.

8-11:30: Live music. $6. Gumar and His Magical Midi Band; The Blow; C.O.C.O; Saints of Everyday Failures.

More info/contact: Myspace: army of none olympia, infokim@zhonka.net, or kayck@olywa.net

The workshops are for students ready to end the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan. All-ages music.

See related article on page 1.

Heartsparkle Players present Stories of Parenting in Tough Times
Friday, January 11, 7 pm, Traditions Café, 300 5th Avenue, across from Capitol Lake

Playback Theatre is a spontaneous collaboration between performers and audience. People tell moments from their lives, then watch them re-created with movement, music and dialogue. POWER will be our guest community organization to be part of our performance and receive a portion of the proceeds. Through this collaboration we acknowledge and honor the work individuals and organizations do in our community. Children are always welcome - they need to be comfortable with sitting for about an hour and a half and you need to be comfortable with the theme of the evening.

Cost: $5-10 (No one is turned away and group rates available)

Free School Baking Skills, Sustainable Weight-Loss Class
Baking Skills: Saturday, 12 January, 2 pm Fertile Ground Guesthouse ~ 311 9th Avenue SE, Olympia, WA 98501 (behind public library); Sustainable Weight Loss, same location, January 20, 6:30–8 pm.

All classes free of charge. Pre-Registration not required

Baking Skills: Gluten-, Soy-, Dairy-Free Desserts ~ Is the person sitting next to you eating that big toothsome slice of cake getting you down? Don't be sad if you can't eat gluten, or dairy, or even soy. There's hope for you! Learn the tricks of the trade from freelance gluten-free baker Jenn Kliese, and you'll have even your wheat-eating friends drooling at your sweet dessert creations. Facilitator: Jenn Kliese

Sustainable Weight-Loss: We will discuss the top ten ways to adjust your food and lifestyle as a way to get balanced around digestive issues, overconsumption, cravings, exercise, primary food, and more. Location: Fertile Ground Studio (the little house located in the backyard). Facilitator: Summer Bock

People's Summit & March on the Capitol Poverty Action, MLK Day
Monday, January 21, 9 am- Summit Registration, St. John's Episcopal Church (114 20th Ave SE, Olympia), 11 am- March on the state capitol

Join us as we march on the state capitol in Olympia to call upon the state legislature and the Governor to make ending poverty a priority. As the number of people living in poverty increases in Washington State, we are urging our lawmakers to support policies that would allow access to opportunity, health and well-being, and work that pays!

Register online with the Statewide Poverty Action Network at www.povertyaction.org or call 1-866-789-7726. Transportation, childcare and lunch available - please fill out the online registration form and make a note about transportation in the "special needs" box.

Call Pat with the Thurston County Tenants Union if you have questions about this event or are looking for a scholarships to attend it: (360) 943-3036 or tctu@tenantsunion.org

Reproductive Rights Counter-Demonstration
Tuesday, January 22, 12 pm, Capitol Steps, Olympia, Washington

Please show your support for reproductive freedom by counter-protesting during the annual "March for Life." As the anti-choicers arrive by the busload on the 35th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, counter-demonstrators will gather to show support for continued reproductive options. Bring signs, coat-hangers, bullhorns, friends, kids, and the courage to face off with some terrifyingly close-minded enemies of choice!

See related article on page 4.

Free School Class: Sugar Blues: Workshop
Monday, January 28, 6:30–8 pm, Fertile Ground (in the kitchen) ~ 311 9th Avenue SE, Olympia, WA 98501 (behind public library)

Learn how to reduce sugar cravings. Willpower and deprivation are not necessary to end cravings. What is your body really trying to tell you? You'll know after this workshop. Facilitator: Summer Bock

The 5th Annual Middle East Film Festival: "Origins. Exile. Refuge."
The Evergreen State College, Jan 30 - Feb 12. All screening are FREE and open to the public.

After four years of phenomenal films and speakers, Students Educating Students About the Middle East (SESAME) invites the public to join us for The 5th Annual Middle East Film Festival - Origins. Exile. Refuge. Together we will explore issues of the Middle East beyond the stereotypes of War and Agression, focusing on identity in exile, the refugee crisis in Palestine and Iraq, music and art, resistance and solidarity.

We feature two weeks of films about the Middle East, surrounding regions and the diaspora with guest speakers including filmmakers, veterans, and organizers. The film festival program will soon be available at www.evergreen.edu/sesame.

For more info, contact sesame@evergreen.edu or call (360)867-6724.

Anti-War Teach-In
The Evergreen State College, Feb 1 & 2

How do we react to five years of war as community, on campuses and beyond?

This two day teach-in includes legal observer, protest health and safety, and direct action trainings, forums, student led workshops, and strategies for our future.

For registration and information contact sesame@evergreen.edu or call (360)867-6724. Visit www.evergreen.edu/sesame for teach-in schedule. All community members are welcome.

At the newsroom: What happened and what did not happen

by Brendan Funtek

I'll always remember the feeling of numbness and nausea that coursed through my body the day I read Vickie Kilgore's editorial ("At the port: What happened and what did not happen," *The Olympian*, Nov. 15). The difference between readers and me is that I walked out of the Olympian newsroom after reading it, reluctant to come back to work that night.

Dissection and accountability

The editorial asserts the newsroom staff were not attacked by the police during the port protests. To verify this, we are given three accounts forever distorted by "misinformation on this topic in community blogs and conversation." Two concern relatively meaningless incidents: Tony Overman, a photographer, was cornered and "pinn[ed] to the fence" by some scary protesters who yelled at him and took a swipe at his lens; Jeremy Pawloski, a reporter, admitted a police officer swung a baton at him but he wasn't "struck."

The third incident, couched in the middle of the editorial, was of videographer Matt McVay being "struck," not attacked, in the face by a "pepper ball." As we read McVay's description of the "pepper ball," we realize this ball delivers more than a welt: McVay is agitated by the "chemicals" that "spread to the side of my head and had caked my ear. The effects didn't burn until I was trying to wash it out." Details of the effects of pepper spray, previously unrevealed in articles concerning its use by police, reveal the "consequences" as phrased by Kilgore of McVay's experience: "From what I can tell, the pepper-spray pellet hit my cheek as I was turning my head, causing it to glance my cheek and spray the chemicals away from me. Had it hit any other way, I am sure I would be in worse shape."

Unfortunate for McVay but just part of the job, Kilgore explains: "Journalists covering breaking news often put themselves at risk…But in volatile situations such as the protests of the past week, our journalists are exposed to the same risks as everyone else when tension escalates."

Yet some of these risks are unnecessary as Kilgore divulged in the encounter with unaccountable, nameless protesters who threatened Overman. "You don't mess with a photographer's equipment…The young demonstrators surrounding and taunting" Overman (who is never directly quoted in the editorial) were irresponsibly "egged on" by mysterious "men in positions of influence in this community."

It's a confusing, disturbing stance to hold as executive editor. McVay actually included the video footage of getting "struck" by the "pepper ball" in his excellent coverage of that night. You quickly see the camera shake and fall to the ground. Luckily, the expensive camera still worked and a dauntless McVay persisted filming.

Although the three incidents shared little in common, the editorial instructively directed public ire at unaccountable protesters and dismissed McVay being shot in the face by an accountable police department. Qualitatively, McVay's incident was far more troubling in concern for the future safety of those employed in the newsroom.

Where I'm coming from

I'm a part-time clerk in the sports department, completely inconsequential to the machinations of the newsroom and entirely out of my league to make grandiose proclamations about their standards. As you'll soon read, this is vital toward understanding how someone like me could even stumble into this now public conflict as a worker.

> McVay was shot in the face! The cheekbone. A few inches away from blindness.

I'm also an activist although I've worked for years to improve as an organizer. Olympia, a politically dynamic town, radicalized me. My education at The Evergreen State College coherently weaved dormant, inexpressible thoughts of conscience from cobwebs to spiderwebs. I wrapped the twitching flies of past indecision into tight sacs to suck from as my education expanded.

As a worker, I initially strode down the path of sports journalism due to kinship with a father who valued trivial names and statistics. Coinciding with a Texas community college education in journalism, I got my first real newsroom experience at the big daily in Amarillo. As the lightly contested scholarships could attest, I conceivably was the only one in a town of 180,000 who actually wanted to be a sports journalist. But what I observed as a sports clerk in the newsroom revealed the banality of this life. Lots of waiting on phone calls, struggles with the encouraged inclination to descend into habitual, formulaic writing. This was the reality of those up the ladder I wanted to climb and I started to shudder at the guest speakers from journalism school who recommended with a tinge of desperation to major in anything but journalism. Experience the real world, they urged.

> Kilgore's editorial externally dealt the issue with such a demoralizing blow, any employee who read it was affected.

Getting laid off allowed me to do just that as I moved to Washington state and got back into my only previous work experience: dish washing. For over three years, I bounced around various restaurants in various cities, ending up in Olympia because of education. It's not easy getting a job here, regardless of past experience, and a ridiculous bus commute to Sumner exacerbated that fact. So when I saw the clerical position available at *The Olympian*'s sports department, I embraced it with no aspiration toward climbing up the ladder and have appreciated the job's details more because of this.

By this point, I was already involved in activism and my good comrades-in-conscience would poke fun at my being with what they considered a dubious institution, at best. With both perspectives as worker and community member, I'm surprised how often the newsroom is externally regarded different from any other office profession life of specialization, hierarchy, competition and insecurity. Some elaborate criticisms of particular articles or newsroom policy could often be tempered with a banal explanation that would likely parallel past experiences of all workers but I often don't know how to respond to those I encounter outside of work.

Although media has every right to be held to high community standards, it would take a multi-fundamental change in our economy and education system to produce the results activists expect newspapers like The Olympian to make. Perhaps my limited understanding of the vast complexity of this problem has led me to unfortunately disregard specific complaints as I instead shift mental focus to the structural inadequacies that will inevitably produce the problem again.

It goes without saying that my little position in the sports department, a world specifically impervious to political problems, is never going to conflict with my work as an organizer. I can separate the two lives with the ease almost all workers discover when pursuing passions that have nothing to do with their paycheck.

Occasionally, I've run into social justice friends so full of contempt for "The Daily Zero," their look of disgust upon finding out where I work coincides with stomaching the realization they now know someone who works there. But I was never ostracized for my occupation which reaffirmed I work for the right causes.

My past experiences at the port must have influenced my reaction toward what I felt in the newsroom from the night I saw McVay's face to the day I read Kilgore's editorial. But even without that past, I would have known we deserved better as workers.

In the newsroom

My cubicle wall isn't high enough. I grimaced looking at McVay's face that night and I had seen my fair share of bruises, swelling and bad heaviness from friends already this week. What startled me the most about McVay, a man of average height, was that they aimed above his torso. Days earlier, I had seen a good friend get shot at close range with pepper spray pellets at the hip, leg and chest. These were not errant shots, they were methodically spread out so the spray would effect his body. But I noticed the police often pointed the guns below their target's head, even when threatening to shoot.

> Denying McVay was attacked meant Kilgore's removal as his protector.

Could it be that McVay, a cameraman with visibly expensive equipment, a cameraman who filmed such good footage of police attacks in days prior that a personal friend of mine pursuing a lawsuit against the police force had bought McVay's footage to use in court, a cameraman whose face was partially concealed by a camera at the moment of being shot, could it be that he was shot on purpose?

Au contraire, replied anyone in the newsroom subject to my open ramblings. After all, how could I know? I wasn't there! These Noble Guardians of Objectivity sent me back to my conspiracy-proof wood shack, relegated to that special realm of insanity where you're hastily deleted from Oliver Stone's answering machine.

But what was most surprising was the distraction of my assumption to others. As I naturally transitioned into more legitimate, productive concerns like employee safety in the future, my 'biased' past and erroneous conclusion of why McVay was shot in the face kept changing the subject from one basic fact: McVay was shot in the face! The cheekbone. A few inches away from blindness. In fact, I asked many port protesters before I finally heard and confirmed another instance where a person was shot in the face.

Despite these unusual, brief conversations with co-workers, nothing prepared me for Kilgore's editorial. I left the newsroom the night McVay was shot assured Kilgore would seek clarification from the police department as to what happened to her videographer. At worst, an executive editor might quietly see what boundaries can be established with a police lieutenant to prevent her workers from being hit again and not bother to inform them. After all, a photographer temporarily blinded from pepper spray or a reporter nervously fixated on a cop's baton is a significant hindrance to your newsroom's goal of witnessing and reporting the news.

And it's possible this 'worst' scenario took place. But Kilgore's editorial externally dealt the issue with such a demoralizing blow, any employee who read it was affected. It's tough to explain but reporters and photographers who won't assert themselves in defense of "not wanting to be part of the story" parallel those days you hid a sickness to keep the income steady. Denying McVay was attacked meant Kilgore's removal as his protector. Which led me to Kilgore's office.

Meeting with Kilgore

This isn't a movie, no dramatic climax necessary. The meeting lasted maybe three minutes and Kilgore understood and thanked me for the only concern I brought up: employees should wear some type of vest to distinguish themselves in tense situations.

If you're disappointed I didn't turn this office meeting into some grand confrontation of conflicting ideas, I can only clarify my concern rests with anyone who gets attacked in the future. With personal friends, I can legally stand as witness to the abuse I saw them undergo if necessary. With newsroom coworkers, I'm assured that will never happen, always astonished to what extent their "objectivity" produces some form of paralytic uncertainty regarding their basic rights like safety. With both corporate and inde-

▸ See **OLYMPIAN** on page 6

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▸ **TWO WEEKS** continued from page 1

Local 47, although this has been difficult because the members of this small local are dependent on military shipments for a significant proportion of their work and few feasible alternatives to contracts with the military have been put forward. In the most recent protests, the union or at least its local leadership was not supportive of our actions to close the port.

On Nov. 1, PMR found out from a City Council member and major peace activist, TJ Johnson, that the USNS Brittin would dock in Olympia and unload its cargo. The original PMR position was that we would try to block outgoing shipments but not incoming military equipment. However, on Nov. 4, the night before the ship landed in a very long meeting, PMR voted 29-14 to try to stop the Stryker vehicles and other military equipment from leaving the port.

Most of the 14 who voted against trying to physically stop the military vehicles believed that blocking incoming military supplies would not be understood or supported by most of the Olympia and South Sound community.

The 29 who voted for stopping the shipments argued that the military equipment was part of the ongoing war against the Iraqi people, that is was being refurbished and repaired at Ft. Lewis to be used again in Iraq, and that it was part of a revolving door of war materials coming from and going back to Iraq. The position to block these shipments became the PMR position with a commitment to try to explain to the public this "revolving door". In addition, participants at this and the next meeting pointed out that the Depleted Uranium (DU) on the returning military vehicles was a danger to the Longshore workers unloading the ship, to the soldiers and truckers transporting the equipment and to the residents of Olympia. We shared the information on DU that we gathered with the ILWU although they proceeded to unload this military ship.

Two Weeks of Actions

On Nov. 5 and 6, there was a vigil and march through Olympia of 160 people and a rally at the Port, where two of the main speakers were veterans of the Iraq war. As pointed out by local activist and geographer, Zoltán Grossman, there are few other locations in the US where a major military base is near a progressive community. We make the argument that ending the war and working for economic justice such as health care for all, free college education, and a living wage is a principled way to support the troops. A few members of Veterans for Peace have played a major role in PMR. On Nov. 7, as military equipment and Stryker vehicles left the Port, almost 100 people sat or stood in the streets to block the vehicles. Olympia police cleared the streets using pepper spray and clubs. One participant in this action, with no warning, was hit directly in the face by a police officer's club causing his chin to split open.

Over the next few days, divisions between those favoring physical barricades versus those who have favored sitting down in front of the trucks leaving the port diminished as both tactics were seen as having value by most participants. The 14 people who originally opposed physically blocking the supplies changed their minds and supported the blockade in words and action. By the third day of actions, Nov. 7, many people in addition to the original organizers participated in slowing down and/or stopping the weapons and military cargo from leaving the Port. Gender dynamics improved. Initially some of the men opposed women meeting separately and a few were disrespectful. Mutual respect grew through these actions that went on 24 hours a day with people leaving and coming back. Positive has been the growing intergenerational unity. Although most of the participants blockading the port are under 25 years old, and the majority of these are students at the Evergreen State College, there have also been many older participants. Although there have been some tensions over definitions of non-violence and over tactics and goals, anarchists, socialists, people who define themselves primarily as peace activists, and black bloc people worked together in a functioning alliance.

On Nov. 9th, about 60 courageous people sat down in front of a truck inching forward, endangering the people sitting down. The driver finally stopped as did another truck carrying military cargo. Barricades were built at the other exit and for 17 hours no military equipment moved out of the Port. This was longer than the WTO was closed down in Nov. 1999 in Seattle. The next day, riot police shot pepper spray into people's eyes, eventually forcing us away from the port entrance. The military equipment was temporarily blocked from moving through downtown Olympia and onto the main entrance to the freeway to Ft. Lewis.

Sixteen people were arrested and many more were pepper sprayed or butted by clubs. Olympia resembled an occupied city with police spread out in riot gear and military convoys on the streets. Activists including key medical and legal support teams from surrounding communities including Portland, Tacoma, Grays Harbor and Port Townsend joined us in acts of needed support and solidarity.

Protest continued Sunday and Monday, Veterans' Day, as did the transport of Strykers although the majority of military cargo remained within the Port. Riot police surrounded protesters limiting direct action.

Tuesday, Nov. 13, 2007

Tuesday, Nov. 13 will be a day long remembered by many in Olympia. In the morning, about 20 people sat down at the Port entrance blocking military equipment from moving. For 13 hours, no military equipment moved out of the Port. Hence, for a minimum of 30 hours, we stopped Stryker vehicles from returning to Ft. Lewis, a major action and statement. In the evening about 200 people gathered at the Port of Olympia entrance to resist by various and complementary means the war and the militarization of Olympia. In the midst of this action, a GI from Ft. Lewis who was supposed to be involved in the transport of these military vehicles to Ft. Lewis, walked out of the Port, saying he was against the war and refused to transport the war equipment.

▸ **TWO WEEKS** continued on next page

Why Counter-demonstrate for Women's Health?

Former resident sheds light on current fight for rights

by Marit Knutson

As a Radical Women member, which is part of the Bay Area Coalition for Our Reproductive Rights (BACORR), I have been asked by many constituents – liberal and radical alike – why counter-demonstrate? First, why hit the streets on a "wedge issue" that further severs the beleaguered anti-war movement? And second, why restrict their freedom of speech? The religious and conservative out-of-towners will march and then leave, and their message will apparently have no impact since we are all progressives here.

Is this really the case though?

Since January 2005, the "Walk for Life – West Coast," funded by the Archdioceses of San Francisco and Oakland, has bused in 15,000 people annually on the weekend commemorating the historic anniversary of Roe v Wade. They enter en masse and march along the Embarcadero, with children, rosaries, and large crosses, proclaiming "Abortion hurts women" and "Women deserve better than abortion." The staunch religious platform was a shock to me last year when I first participated in the counter-demonstration. The opposition is composed of everyday folks, but their call to action represents an extremely dangerous contemporary current.

The reproductive justice movement is more than just about abortion. We have a common opponent, in which building solidarity is paramount. The notion of a fracturing effect negates this opportunity. In forming a united front, we must face this current of the right wing and oppose their agenda as they continue mobilizing thousands of young people, telling them that women's lives aren't at stake and that women are actually murderers when they seek abortion. This continues to be an issue of public health, affecting the self-determination of the queer community, women of color, low income women, and all those with resources least available to them. Historically these women have been least able to get the help they need most, and the ones who fall victim to vicious attacks and scape-goating. Faced with the right wing's adoration of the police state and the often vocal support of the Iraq war and other imperialist atrocities, the reproductive justice movement is angrier than ever. And as the movement becomes more multi-issue and inclusive, we become stronger and more representative of the interests of all oppressed segments of the population. We have so much to gain from being united, and too much to lose if we refuse to counter-demonstrate as a coalition.

This year the right wing will arrive again, on Jan. 19, and so will we, countering their presence in San Francisco, which they dubbed "one of America's darkest cities." The reproductive justice movement headed by BACORR will be commemorating the 35th anniversary of Roe, celebrating a woman's right to choose. The event will be celebratory, but the nature of the climate today must be taken into account: the right to a safe, legal abortion hangs by a thread, especially after recent regressive Supreme Court rulings that were tipped in favor of the anti-choice movement by Bush's appointees.

I agree with the rightwing on one point, however. Women do deserve better than abortion. We deserve free, comprehensive medical coverage. We deserve safe, legal access to abortion and all other reproductive medical procedures when needed. We deserve to not be forced in any regard – we reserve the freedom from having unwanted children, from being sterilized without our notification based on racist eugenics laws from the 1920s, from being told there is no other option but to keep the child, especially if we are poor women of color. We deserve not to have reproductive healthcare funds federally cut, as occurred under the Hyde Amendment. And no more parental consent laws! Making abortion hard to access or illegal only creates countless dangerous scenarios where women must perform the procedure themselves, complicating their own lives and often leading to permanent injury or death. So yes, women do deserve better than abortion. Women deserve more rights, not less.

Let's continue to move forward, not backward – REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE FOR ALL!

[Editor's Note: A counter-demonstration to the Washington State "March for Life" is planned for noon on Tuesday, January 22 at the Capitol Campus. See Announcements for more information.]

Marit Knutson is an Evergreen State College graduate whose focus was political economy. She lives in San Francisco and is a member for Bay Area Radical Women and a faction member in the Bay Area Coalition for Our Reproductive Rights.

Counter-demonstrators protest the 2007 "March For Life" in San Francisco. Photo by Marit Knudson.

▸ **TWO WEEKS** continued from previous page

This was a very powerful action and reminded me of the increasing resistance to the Vietnam war by active duty soldiers. Civilian anti-war and GI cooperation and solidarity is a key to ending this war. This is a victory for the Olympia Port Militarization Resistance (PMR) and the anti-war movement as a whole.

Also, on the evening of the 13th, 38 courageous women sat down, linking arms, at the entrance to the port and the women refused to leave even as riot police told them they would be pepper sprayed if they didn't move. The women refused to move and were arrested by the police beginning at 9 pm, and held for seven hours. Beginning around 10 pm, a large convoy of Stryker vehicles left through a different Port exit with the connecting roads being cleared by police shooting pepper balls, stinger balls, bean bag rounds, and pepper spray. By 1:30 am, the resistance slowed. Vigils continued as most but not all of the military equipment left the port. From Nov. 7–15, 63 people were arrested; many more were hit by pepper spray. The actions ended with a march of more than 400 in support of the port resistance on Nov. 17, including many who had not taken part in the activities of the previous 12 days.

On Nov. 11, over 100 people attended a forum at the Olympia City Council where protesters spoke up about the excessive police violence—pepper spray in their eyes, being arrested for no cause, being hit with a police club. Olympia, Washington and the surrounding communities are divided. Participants and a few non-participants in these protests have seen first hand, totally unjustified police force at some of the actions. For example, on Nov. 13, a non-participant in these actions, Kris Krossman, who was skateboarding along Capitol Way, was shot repeatedly with pepper balls and struck multiple times in the face with a baton. He decided not to go to work the next day at a local children's museum because he was afraid his appearance would scare the kids. On the other hand, many residents believe that the demonstrations were wrong and that the police were justified in the force they used.

The Olympian

The only mainstream newspaper in Olympia, *The Olympian,* wrote two major editorials, Nov. 15, calling the port protesters "whiners" for complaining about police behavior and called for protesters to be prosecuted and fined. *The Olympian* focused on the small amount of property damage and disruption of traffic in condemning the actions. There were many letters to the editor praising the protests; many have compared them to the Boston Tea Party as an example of worthwhile civil disobedience. However, the majority of letters to the editor have also strongly criticized the port blockade claiming that anti-war behavior should be limited to voting for anti-war candidates and to protests that are non-disruptive and 100% legal.

That the mainstream media, even those that oppose the war are critical and misrepresent our actions should come as no surprise. To counter this, we need to go to many more people than we have so far to explain face to face what we are doing: why we are engaging in civil disobedience, civil resistance and direct action, and listen better to and incorporate more people before, during and after these actions and before the next one.

While calling demonstrators "whiners," was clearly done by *The Olympian* and others to discredit us and to gain further support for the Olympia police, it is important that we document and challenge police brutality but not exaggerate it, and that we keep the war, not the police, as our main focus.

For the most part, barricades and human blockades were aimed only at military vehicles, e.g., non-military cargo were let through. Although residents were occasionally inconvenienced, it is important that this not be an aim of an action, that "No Business as Usual" does not mean disrupting people's lives unless that cannot be avoided when directly interfering with the war machine. People decided not to throw anything at the police even when attacked and that was followed with very few exceptions. These few exceptions occurred only in response to police violence

Strategy

Although there were and are ongoing tensions in discussing and acting on effective tactics and actions, the majority of participants supported a diversity of tactics. Most believe or at least accept the idea that a variety of actions from vigils to forums to rallies to legal demonstrations to civil disobedience to sit-ins at politician's offices to direct action have value – that all of these tactics combined are stronger than each one separately; that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

A difficult and unresolved question that surfaced during the protests and since the actions ended, is how different groups can and should work together who have significant differences with regards to ideology, strategy, constituency and tactics in an action such as this one. The main but not the only group organizing this recent resistance was PMR. We are committed to non-violence.

During the actions, there were debates over what is non-violence and what tactics are strategic. These discussions are ongoing as PMR and others reflect on what happened and plan future actions. For example, during the November actions, PMR members were strongly against using personal property of non-participants to block military vehicles.

There were debates about the timing of building barricades; building blockades too soon can be taken down by the police before the Strykers come through and needlessly, disrupt lives of Olympians. Trying to build them too late may make it impossible to construct physical blockades, as the riot police are there. We need coordination among various groups involved in planning and carrying out actions; some actions will take place that many do not agree with but for the most part, we should not publicly condemn or try to stop them. We should know generally what is happening and then decide whether to stay or leave.

On the other hand, everyone or even each group doing what they think is best or what they want to do is individualistic and ignores that one group's actions affects all of us and our movement. There may be some actions that seriously jeopardize people's safety in ways they do not want, or so discredit the actions of the majority that they should be publicly criticized and we should try to stop them, physically if necessary, from occurring, e.g., prevent the breaking of windows of small locally owned businesses. (This is hypothetical; no one suggested or did this.) There should

▸ **TWO WEEKS** continues on page 8

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Aimee Allison, co-author of *Army of One*, with her community of many.

▸ **ARMY OF ONE** continued from front page

How about all that money they dangle in front of you? Does it sounding promising? Do you think the military will help you become financially secure? Read the fine print, and don't be taken in. 48% of people currently serving in the military have reported financial strain, Allison and Solnit tell us, and 33% of homeless men in the US are veterans.

Don't trust those contracts either; they are essentially meaningless, because they can be changed at any time. Allison and Solnit quote from the military's own enlistment/re-enlistment document, that states "Laws and regulations that govern military personnel may change without notice to me. Such changes may affect my status, pay allowances, benefits, and responsibilities as a member of the armed forces, regardless of the provisions of this enlistment/re-enlistment document." What's the point of signing a contract that can be nullified, without notice, at any time?

One by one, *Army of None* shows that the promises of recruiters are misleading and downright false. With every page that you turn, it grows more and more difficult to think of the military as anything but a death trap. Military recruitment is rampant in high schools, particularly if they are lacking in funds.

But this book doesn't just leave you to bemoan the fate of the world and feel helpless and surrounded by corruption, it tells you how to do something about it.

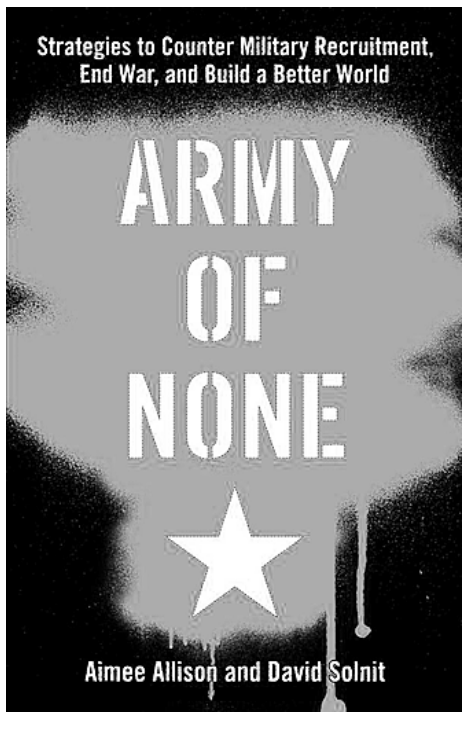
Army of None informs you of equal access rights; that you have the right to hand out fliers to students, as long as they have not yet entered the school grounds. If you are a student, you may "organize, promote and participate in organizations and political groups." Also, *Army of None* tells us "Students have the right to wear political and other types of buttons, badges and armbands."

You don't have to simply stand by while the military sells its snake oil; people have the right to bring counter-recruitment information to schools, especially if they happen to be a student at the school in question. Fliers and pictures like those featured in the book are relatively easy to come by, and there are many ways to keep the military from getting a hold of the young people it wants to ensnare. For example, teachers can be allies in the fight against military recruitment in our schools, and these potential friends and allies should not be ignored.

It must be hard to attract people to a job that involves killing, along with the risk of being killed, far from friends and family in a sweltering hot country, in an immoral and illegal war. These difficulties, however, are no justification for lying to young people. Many people remain blissfully ignorant of what the military is doing in our public schools. Any community where there are recruiters lurking around needs to be informed of the malignant presence, and quickly.

One of the authors of *Army of None*, David Solnit, along with Chanan Suarez-Diaz, President of Washington Iraq Veterans Against the War, will be in Olympia on Jan. 11 to lead workshop for students (see box).

Phoebe Blanding is a freshman at Avanti High School in Olympia, Washington. Her career plans do not involve joining the military.


Strategies to Counter Military Recruitment, End War, and Build a Better World
ARMY OF NONE
Aimee Allison and David Solnit

David Solnit, the other co-author of *Army of One*, pulling the strings.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

POOR PEOPLE'S SUMMIT AND MARCH ON THE CAPITOL TO END POVERTY

by Pat Tassoni

"The existence of poverty in the US should not be accepted as a necessary evil or an insoluble problem, but should be considered a crisis requiring emergency measures. It is a matter of will and priorities, not a matter of resources."
—Martin Luther King, Jr.

Ending poverty, creating opportunity

Everyone has the right to be safe and healthy but in Washington state many people are without the means to ensure the safety and security of themselves and their families. This places Washington residents at risk; it is dangerous to be forced to sleep on the streets, to go without food, or basic healthcare. Everyone in our state should have the means to secure their basic health and well-being. Everyone who works has the right to a job that allows them to support themselves and their families.

A growing network of churches, labor organizations and non-profits will again bring their members to march on the state Capitol on Jan. 21. Uniting under the above words of Martin Luther King, Jr. on his holiday, they will urge elected representatives to make ending poverty in Washington a priority. The legislative session will just have begun and your voice is needed to encourage the state government to play a leading role in ensuring that everyone in Washington is able to meet their basic needs. Bills and issues expected to come up this legislative session are geared toward creating more affordable housing and protecting tenants rights as well as solving homelessness; regulating payday lending and predatory mortgages; and expanding living wage and health care.

The day begins at 9 am with a morning of issue trainings and skill-building workshops on the legislative process and bills concerning poverty that are being, or should be, considered by our representatives. At 11 am there will be a march to the Capitol steps where we will rally; lunch will be provided. Participants are then encouraged to meet with their legislators to impart their messages about poverty. The summit is located at St. John's Episcopal Church (on the corner of Capital Way and 20th Ave SE in Olympia).

Poor people's movement

When MLK had just celebrated his fifth birthday, 1,000 unemployed Washingtonians marched on the capitol in Olympia in a Hunger March (Jan. 17, 1933) to call upon the legislature to address the conditions of hunger, homelessness, housing, poverty and unemployment. The state responded with stalling decisions but managed to pass a relief bill using federal money. Six weeks later, Franklin Roosevelt took office as President, implementing the New Deal policies that brought welfare, Medicare, unemployment, social security and public works programs.

Shortly after MLK celebrated his ninth birthday, FDR delivered his second inaugural speech (Jan. 20, 1937), the point of which was to wrestle society-controlling power from corporations and give it back to the people:

"But here is the challenge to our democracy: In this nation I see tens of millions of its citizens – a substantial part of its whole population – who at this very moment are denied the greater part of what the very lowest standards of today call the necessities of life.

"I see millions of families trying to live on incomes so meager that the pall of family disaster hangs over them day by day.

"I see millions whose daily lives in city and on farm continue under conditions labeled indecent by a so-called polite society half a century ago . . .

"I see one-third of a nation ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished."

Where are we now in the 21st century, on the 75th anniversary of Washington's first Hunger March? One-third of our state is ill-housed and ill-nourished. (No doubt due at least in part to sweatshop labor, we are not ill-clad.) Across our state as many as 1.7 million people are struggling in poverty, many with low-wage jobs, unable to meet their basic needs.

> Across our state as many as 1.7 million people are struggling in poverty, many with low-wage jobs, unable to meet their basic needs.

A few years ago, Washington ranked as the second hungriest state in the union and Washington continues to have one of the highest rates of hunger in the nation. Nowhere in the state can anyone working a minimum-wage job or anyone on public benefits afford fair-market rental housing costs in the state. In Washington, there are not enough jobs for the unemployed as there are more people looking for work than there are job openings that pay a living wage. Today, minimum wage, a concept established in 1959, is further below the poverty line than it has ever been.

National poverty was the impetus for Martin Luther King to officially launch the Poor People's Campaign shortly before his assassination:

"I think [a job] ought to be the first thing that we guarantee every person capable of working a job. And this can be done in many, many ways. There are many things that need to be done that could be done that's not being done now. And this could provide the jobs.... And of course, there are definitely going to be people all along, people who are unemployable, as a result of age, as a result of something that failed to develop here or there, and as a result of physical disability. Now these are the people who just couldn't work. Certainly they have a right to have an income. If one has a right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, then he has a right to have an income. Now, this may mean a radical, in a sense, redefinition of work. Maybe we've got to come to see that a mother who's at home as a housekeeper or as a housewife is working."

Pat Tassoni is staff of the Thurston County Tenants Union and can be reached at (360) 943-3036 to resigter for the march or tctu@tenantsunion.org.

▸ **OLYMPIAN** continued from page 3

pendent journalists, we as activists can already acknowledge their presence at a protest as being necessary witnesses, a level below legal observers. It is precisely their lack of participation in the protest itself that is needed to convey why we're there in the first place. Even police are presumably supposed to know this.

I recall reading some online post recently where someone was bothered when an Olympian reporter clarified his position and thus avoided potential violence from an officer. Yet it's still an ambiguous status, this particular press badge, as the cheekbone shot proved. However, my concern is for all journalists.

In this strange society, their positions are considered the rational buffer no police action will cross. Only a madman as police chief would publicly portray journalists as threats or unapologetically insinuate their distinction means nothing if police feel threatened. The words "clearly identified" will not be disregarded in a police report, press coverage or a trial.

Internationally, we've seen this comprehension ignored at times by the US military in Iraq. In November of 2007, a The Independent (UK) story stated "one landmark which passed virtually unnoticed was that the Iraq conflict has become the deadliest by far for the media trying to cover it, with more than 200 journalists killed to date. To put this in perspective, two were killed in the First World War, 68 in the Second, 77 in Vietnam and 36 in the Balkans." ("The most dangerous war in the history of journalism," 11/19/2007).

My specific concern for future actions in Olympia rest with this statistic as its not uncommon for military veterans to become police officers. If the Iraq war stands as a future indicator for what could happen here, then it is essential that some solid communication happen now with police and all press, independent and mainstream. This would provide backbone for the lack of accountability from the police department in this port protest.

I depressingly must admit that I represent no one but myself in the newsroom. It took six weeks for me to disregard my lowest rung status and meet with Kilgore to address this obvious issue. Right after the meeting, my fortune cookie told me "Your ideas will be needed to solve a problem."

Brendan Funtek is an Evergreen graduate and a member of the Olympia Movement for Justice and Peace and Port Militarization Resistance, among others. He can be reached at MobyDick1980@aim.com .

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The right to housing in New Orleans

by Marco Rosaire Rossi

On Dec. 10, 2007, activists around the United States converged in New Orleans to join the Stop the Demolition Coalition. The coalition's goal is to prevent the Department of Housing and Urban Development from following through with its plan to bulldoze 4,600 low-income apartments. The plan is part of a federal and municipal government effort to "rebuild" New Orleans after the devastating affects of Hurricane Katrina. Since Katrina, housing has become the issue of New Orleans: over 12,000 people are homeless, 50,000 remain in FEMA trailers, and another 900,000 are awaiting federal funds to rebuild their homes.

The date of the convergence was chosen for a reason: It's International Human Rights Day. Members of the Stop the Demolition Coalition are expected to sign a pledge which states: "I believe in the fundamental human right to housing, and I will not be a witness to the denial of this right to the peoples of New Orleans and the Gulf Coast." The activists are not alone in their proclamation that housing is a human right. Article 25 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR) states that "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including... housing."

The United States helped draft the UDHR, and the chair of the committee, Eleanor Roosevelt, once referred to it as the "new Magna Carta," but that is as far as the US has gone in recognizing all its provisions. Since that time the political culture in the US has been divided into two anti-UDHR wings. On one side are those who share the view of UN Ambassador Jeanne Kirkpatrick, who described the provisions of the Universal Declaration dealing with economic, social, and cultural rights as "a letter to Santa Claus" that "Neither nature, experience, nor probability informs these lists of 'entitlements,' which are subject to no constraints except those of the mind and appetite of their authors." On the other side are those who believe that while economic, social, and cultural rights may not be a "letter to Santa Claus," they aren't important. Civil and political rights take priority and must be immediately recognized, while economic, social, and cultural rights can be gradually developed over time. Neither view is congruent with the preamble of the UDHR, which calls on states "to promote respect for these rights and...to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance." The review was reiterated in 1993 by the Vienna Declaration on Human Rights which stated that all human rights are "indivisible, interdependent, and universal."

> Since Katrina, housing has become the issue of New Orleans: over 12,000 people are homeless, 50,000 remain in FEMA trailers, and another 900,000 are awaiting federal funds to rebuild their homes.

The UDHR is a moral document, not a legal one. It's a resolution that was passed by the UN general assembly – not an international treaty. However, since 1966, there has existed the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights which not only legally protects the right to housing but also the right to education, to a job, to protection from unemployment, to healthcare, to social security, to join trade unions and to strike, among many others. It is not surprising – considering its disdain for such rights – that the US has neglected to sign this treaty. The neglect is grossly out of line with the feelings of the American people. A poll done by World Public Opinion in 2004, found that 90% agreed (and 66% strongly agreed) with the statement that: "Because the world is so interconnected today it is important for the US to participate, together with other countries, in efforts to maintain peace and protect human rights." In this way the United States government has failed its people.

Where the US government has failed, the Stop the Demolition Coalitions hopes to succeed. Bill Quigley, an attorney fighting for the right to housing in New Orleans, put the matter this way: "Human rights are enforced by humans. Hopefully they're enforced by the courts. Hopefully they're enforced by the legislature and the like. But if they're not, it's our responsibility to enforce those human rights. And the human right to housing and the human right to be treated fairly and the human right not to be subjected to racial discrimination and economic injustice is a right that we're going to have to try to enforce ourselves." So far, this "self-enforcement" has worked. Protesters have temporarily stopped the demolition of the B.W. Cooper housing site in New Orleans. More demonstrations at local and federal government buildings are scheduled.

How long this protest will last and how successful it will be remains to be seen, but with consistence and determination eventually there will be a year when Americans can celebrate the right to housing, rather than always fighting for it.

[Editor's Note: On December 20, the New Orleans City Council voted to proceed with demolition of the B.W. Cooper housing project, despite protests outside the City Council chambers. Demonstrators were pepper-sprayed, and 15 were arrested.]

Marco Rosaire Rossi is a student in the Masters in International Law Program at the United Nations mandate school the University for Peace in San Jose, Costa Rica.

Dec. 20: Police used pepper spray and tasers to prevent New Orleans residents from entering City Hall, where the fate of public housing was being decided. Above photo and topmost photo by Mavis Yorks. All other photos by Fraugg.

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Parting words from the mayor to the activist community

by Mark Foutch

[*Editor's note:* Works in Progress *strives to present progressive voices and perspectives that are otherwise underrepresented and marginalized. We have, however, occasionally granted space to mainstream or already prominent voices in order to spark discussion. In this case, Olympia Mayor Mark Foutch offers criticism to the local activist community on the eve of his departure from office.*

Look to the next issue of Works in Progress *for responses to Mayor Foutch's comments*.]

They say that the first sign of insanity is the urge to write a letter to the editor. And with only a couple of weeks to go on my sixteenth and final year on the Olympia City Council, I must be positively "certifiable" to try just one more. Still...

Reading the December *Works in Progress*, I was struck by how many writers completely miss the connection between actions by previous Olympia councils, initiated and supported by the progressive activist community, and how those actions have influenced the past two council elections, with results the same activists now complain about.

I think three issues—the *USS Olympia* controversy, the Nuclear Free Zone, and this past summer's opposition to naval vessels visiting during Lakefair—have been key in this political shift on the Council.

> You'd think local activists would be absolutely ecstatic with these new public officials but apparently not.

The draft resolution that would have put the Council on record as opposing a visit by the *USS Olympia* contained such inflammatory language that it inevitably produced a local, regional and even national backlash. Despite the fact that the Council ultimately took no action, anger and frustration still festers in many parts of our community and the belief is still widespread on the Internet, for example, that the Council "told the sub it couldn't come."

With the Nuclear Free Zone ordinance, it didn't seem to matter to its advocates that the Council earlier had joined Mayors for Peace and passed a resolution calling on national governments for the worldwide, complete, enforceable and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons. (We received no complaints about that action, by the way.) Instead, an actual ordinance had to be adopted, despite years of experience in other cities showing that such ordinances could have very little, if any, practical effect.

Many, many voters in Olympia did not like those two actions by their Council. They wondered, "Where did this all come from?" They were justified in their curiosity. During the 2001 and 2003 elections, not one candidate included "international peace activism" as a platform goal in any of their campaign materials. Now those voters—and campaign supporters—wondered if they had been deceived. And they were angry and frustrated. They felt that their community's reputation had been hijacked by a minority of activists acting through stealth candidates elected to the Council.

In the 2005 campaign, council candidates encountered this anger while doorbelling. Voters that year elected new councilmembers that the activist community bemoaned as "conservative." But they failed to make the connection as to what had motivated the voters, and the candidates. And so, as the 2007 campaigns heated up, local activists came to the council with another proposal guaranteed to outrage those same voters yet again. They didn't realize it, but their timing couldn't have been worse—or better, depending on which side you were on.

Somehow still believing that they were on a roll, activists not only requested the Council go on record prohibiting naval ships from visiting during Lakefair, they issued actual threats of what would happen if the ships came. People watching this spectacle on TCTV, or reading about it in the newspaper, were appalled. The language used in making those threats was worthy of Tony Soprano. To summarize:

"Nice little community celebration you got here. We sure wouldn't want that little community celebration ruined. Our local people are nice and peaceful, but if militants from as far away as Oakland or Bellingham come, who knows what might happen? And it will all be right there on Channel 5."

> Activist writers...are bemoaning the so-called "conservative" candidates just elected to the Olympia City Council. But they admit no responsibility for their own earlier insistence on ill-advised council actions that prompted this backlash by the voters.

That spectacle became the nail in the political coffin for any candidate known or even suspected to be supportive of bans on subs or ships or the ineffective Nuclear Free Zone ordinance. The voters sent in their ballots with that fresh in their minds. And now activist writers in *Works in Progress*, and I imagine in the many blogs that float around the community, are bemoaning the so-called "conservative" candidates just elected to the Olympia City Council. But they admit no responsibility for their own earlier insistence on ill-advised council actions that prompted this backlash by the voters.

We should all count our blessings. The backlash certainly could have been a lot worse. Three very public spirited, honest, dedicated and liberal candidates were elected to the Olympia council in 2007:

Craig Ottavelli and Rhenda Strub were the courageous minority voices on the Thurston County Planning Commission, holding the line against the forces that opposed reducing rural development densities despite a ruling by the Growth Management Hearings Board of Western Washington, responding to a complaint by the environmental group Futurewise. Rhenda, even before taking office, is now immersed in assisting the low income residents of Friendly Village who fear being evicted from their homes for redevelopment of the property.

Doug Mah has a long record of helping the hungry, the homeless, and the low income mentally ill in this community with his participation on the boards of the Food Bank and Behavioral Health Resources, his votes on the City Council, and in more private and personal ways as well. His initiative saved the low income feeding program in downtown Olympia when the Bread and Roses kitchen closed. Doug brought together B&R, the Salvation Army, and others to make sure that service was continued here. His commitment to the environment is manifest in his participation with the State's Puget Sound Action Team. And he's the first non-Caucasian ever to be elected Mayor in Olympia's 150 years as a municipality.

You'd think local activists would be absolutely ecstatic with these new public officials but apparently not.

If there are lessons to be learned from all this, I doubt if the activist community is ready to accept them. But in my humble opinion, in order to accomplish its broader goals, any local elected body has to be very careful not to spend its precious political capital for no real gain. We are very fortunate to have voters here who seem to be able, so far, to separate gratuitous council actions that sometimes disappoint or even outrage them, from the need to support City projects and programs that will maintain and improve the quality of life. But we can't continue to take that support for granted.

As former mayor Holly Gadbaw used to say, "Councilmembers are elected to be the adults in the community. Sometimes we have to say 'No'." Sound advice for any current or future Olympia councilmember.

I try never to miss an issue of *Works in Progress*. It's always lively, provocative and informative, with information not available anywhere else in our local print media. And I've appreciated the opportunity you've given me from time to time to share my thoughts with your readers. I wish you all the best in the years to come.

Mark Foutch was Mayor of Olympia from 2004 to 2007, and was a City Councilmember from 1992 to 2003.

▸ **TWO WEEKS** continued from page 5

and will be a diversity of tactics within and between groups but not anything goes.

A strategy of many SDS members has been to raise the economic or dollar costs of the militarization of the port and of sending war supplies through Olympia: police costs, transportation costs, port security, etc. These dollar costs have been quite large for a small city. Our aim should be to raise, instead, the social (political) cost of waging this war in every community—to make the war less legitimate by building stronger social movements with more popular support that challenge not only the war but also make increasingly illegitimate those in power and the unjust economic system behind it; and contribute toward building growing movements for a fundamentally different society. Building a stronger anti-war movement that calls for immediate withdrawal from Iraq and acts on its beliefs will scare those in power, maybe not Bush but the next President who probably does not want to withdraw from Iraq but will be "forced" to do so.

Next steps

Has this strong and powerful "Two Weeks that Shook Olympia" helped build a stronger anti-war movement in Olympia? Has it raised the social costs of waging this brutal war and occupation of Iraq? People took major physical risks in blocking Stryker vehicles from moving by sitting down in front of them. This is inspirational to others in Olympia and surrounding communities. Hopefully, this courage and commitment will continue as we build a broader and more inclusive movement that integrally connects the war to economic injustice, repression and racism at home and to US corporate domination abroad, that the primarily white student protesters act more in the future in solidarity with the repression and oppression faced by Muslims, African-Americans, Native Americans, Latinos/Latinas, immigrants, poor people and workers in their daily lives. It is hard to assess the support for this port resistance in Olympia, most likely the majority does not support it. More outreach needs to be done. PMR needs to make it easier for people to be involved in our actions who are not already on our listservs.

PMR is continuing to meet to reflect on what happened and to plan further education, action and outreach. Hopefully, the militancy, courage, tactics, and spirit of these very powerful actions will inspire others throughout the US to stand up and not be complicit with the torture and occupation being carried out in our name.

It is very likely the military will not use the Port of Olympia again for military shipments during the duration of the occupation of Iraq. This is a victory. A bigger victory and ongoing task is for PMR to educate ourselves and others about how Olympia is being militarized, e.g., by challenging military recruiters in the schools and the deployment of the National Guard to Iraq. It also means working with the Longshore Union and other communities statewide and nationally and with military resisters to raise the social cost of this war and make it impossible to wage. Now is the time to increase militant and dramatic action against this war as well as more traditional demonstrations where 70% of US residents oppose the war while those in power continue to wage it and most of the Democratic Party leadership acquiesces to it. NOT IN OUR NAME!!

Peter Bohmer is a professor at The Evergreen State College.

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